



James Semerad  
DADS and MOMS PAC  
[Jimsemerad@cs.com](mailto:Jimsemerad@cs.com)  
248-467-1204

February 4, 2010

Senator Mark C. Jansen  
Chairman, Committee on Families and Human Services  
State Capitol  
House Office Building  
Lansing, Michigan 48909

**Subj: PATERNITY LEGISLATION, SB 197**

**Ref:** SB 197 Sen. McManus Family law; paternity; circumstances under which putative father may sue to establish paternity of a child born to a married woman; establish.

Senator Jansen:

Thank you for your efforts to reform family law and make parenting more equitable, gender neutral, and increase efficiencies in state institutions.

Dads and Moms PAC (formerly DADS of Michigan PAC) supports this legislation to, although this bill does not move us far enough to restore equality regarding paternity issues.

The following are some future improvements in current legislation and policy.

**Paternity**

**A. Unwed Parents**

**Issue:** Thirty eight percent (38%) of all children in Michigan are born by unwed parents. Un-wed Fathers are frequently 'duped' into being the Father of children that are not their biological children. Paternity tests prove that the alleged Father is not the biological Father one-third (1/3) of the time. The Michigan parentage law forces the Father to sign the parentage form which waves their right to a paternity test and legal council.

**Solution:** Modify the parentage act and specify mandatory DNA testing of unwed parents.

**B. Truth in Paternity**

**Issue:** Mothers may designate a Father without burden of proof or notification of the alleged Father. A default judgment of paternity occurs even when a Father is not properly notified.

**Solution:** Require a statement by medical institutions to the alleged Father of the rights of parents to request a DNA paternity test. Require confirmed notification to the alleged Father. Modify the parentage form to clearly explain the law. Strike subsection (g) of the parentage act.

C. Children born in unstable marriages

**Issue:** Married parents in unstable relationships may have children that are not of the paternal parents. Michigan law does not provide time to establish paternity, and judges refuse to allow paternity testing. Military personnel may return from service and find that they have new children, that are not their biological children, and divorce is eminent. Michigan law requires the paternal Father to pay child support for the biological Fathers children.

**Solution:** Allow the paternal parent to request a paternity test to establish the biological parent and increase the guideline for paternity testing to 5 years following divorce. Create a task force to reform paternity guidelines.

If there is anything Dads and Mom PAC can do to help and support your effort, please do not hesitate to call me at 248-467-1204.

Sincerely,

*James Semerad*

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Copy to:

Senator Bill Hardiman

Senator Michelle McManus

Senator Raymond Basham

Robert Kerr, Chairman, Dads and Moms PAC